EGGS OF THE ALEUTIAN ROSY FINCH

By JOSEPH MAILLIARD*

WITH ONE PHOTO

IN CONNECTION with the interesting article upon the Aleutian Rosy Finch (*Leucosticte griseonucha*) by Dr. G. Dallas Hanna, just preceding, I submit the following notes upon a series of the eggs of this species.

The size, shape, and the tint of the white of these eggs vary considerably, while, on careful examination, a good many more of them are marked by spots

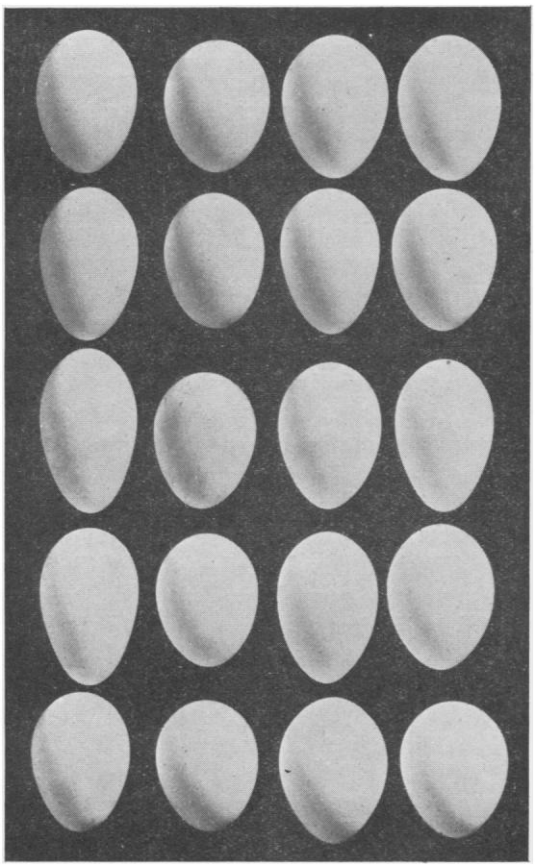

Fig. 33. FOUR SETS, FIVE EGGS EACH, ARRANGED VERTICALLY, OF ALEUTIAN ROSY FINCH, SHOWING VARIATION IN SIZE AND SHAPE.

or specks than is ordinarily supposed. For the most part these spots are of a yellowish or slightly reddish brown. Many are mere specks, some of which are so slight and faintly colored as to be barely perceptible without the aid of a magnifying glass, while other eggs show spots that are minute but strongly

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colored. Some of the sets have one or two eggs with these small specks, and yet have one or two others that are very distinctly marked, for this species. One set has distinct spots of a delicate rosy pink tinge, another set has some of the eggs splotched rather than finely spotted or speckled, and these splotches are reddish in color.

Of forty-four sets of five eggs each, together with one of six eggs, fifteen of the sets were unmarked, nine contained one spotted egg, none had two eggs spotted, eight had three eggs, seven had four eggs, eight all five, while the six-egg set had all but one spotted. Some of these markings look like an incidental stain, as from wet grass or a fly speck, but the magnifying glass shows them to be natural coloration. The greatest number of spots or specks is usually at the larger end of the egg, and in some cases these are arranged somewhat as a ring. In other cases a spot or two on any part of an egg may be the only marking.

Both size and shape of the eggs of this species are very variable. The longest egg measured, in millimeters, 28.3 and the shortest 22.3, with an average of 24.6 for 115 eggs measured; while the width showed extremes of 18.8 and 15.9, with an average of 17.5. There is no particular correlation between the two diameters, however. For example, the longest egg measures 28.3×17.0, while the third shortest in the lot is 22.8×18.2, the one long and slim and the other short and fat.

The measurements of the sets used in figure 33, from left to right are as follows:

(C. A. S. No. 1743) 28.3×17.0, 27.2×17.2, 26.4×17.3, 24.8×17.6, 24.1×17.2.
(C. A. S. No. 1677) 23.5×17.5, 23.0×18.4, 22.8×17.7, 22.9×17.7, 23.4×17.8.
(C. A. S. No. 3660) 26.1×17.4, 25.4×18.8, 25.0×17.9, 24.6×18.3, 25.1×17.3.
(C. A. S. No. 3539) 26.3×17.0, 24.9×18.5, 24.5×18.2, 23.2×18.5, 25.4×18.0.
Average length of the 115 eggs measured is 24.6, and average width is 17.7.
Set nearest to average of the 23 that were measured:
(C. A. S. No. 3543) 24.8×18.2, 24.3×17.7, 24.5×17.9, 24.8×17.7, 23.8×17.5.

The tint of the white of these blown eggs varies somewhat, as before remarked, but not through any great range. Newly laid eggs seem to vary from bluish white, through pure white to slight cream color, while those that have been more or less incubated are apt to become yet a little darker cream color. Possibly some sets have been exposed to an occasional wetting, when not well protected, or the parent may have come on the nest with some of its feathers dampened by rain, but on the whole there is great freedom from stain.

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FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Yellow-headed Blackbird in Company with Brewer Blackbirds.—In volume XXII of THE CONDOR, page 205, Mr. Frank N. Bassett records the unusual occurrence of a Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) flocking with Brewer Blackbirds. Another instance of this was noted at Penticton, British Columbia, on October 19, 1921, when a single male was seen in the midst of a flock of about fifty Brewer Blackbirds. This was of interest to me not only for the unusual association of the two species, but on account of the scarcity of the Yellow-headed Blackbird in that locality and the late date on which it was seen. Another point of interest lay in the uncon-